



# **Dear Librarians: Analyzing Librarian Perception of Students through a Critical Lens**

Lindsay Inge Carpenter, Callie Wiygul Branstiter,  
Charissa Powell

<http://bit.ly/2PUvDNF>

# Introductions

- Lindsay Inge Carpenter (she/her/hers)
  - University of Maryland, College Park
  - Pedagogy Librarian
- Callie Branstiter (she/her/hers)
  - San Francisco State University
  - First Year Experience and Undergraduate Success Librarian
- Charissa Powell (she/her/hers)
  - University of Tennessee, Knoxville
  - Student Success Librarian for Information Literacy

# Learning Outcomes

- Define student shaming
- Apply a critical lens to student shaming

# Who are we?

- Who we serve
  - Undergraduate students
  - International students
  - Transfer students
- What we do
  - Teach, manage, and assess information literacy programs
  - Outreach
  - Committees
- What we believe
  - Student-centered
  - Critical pedagogy

# We love students!

(and assumed everyone else did, too)

# What brought us here?

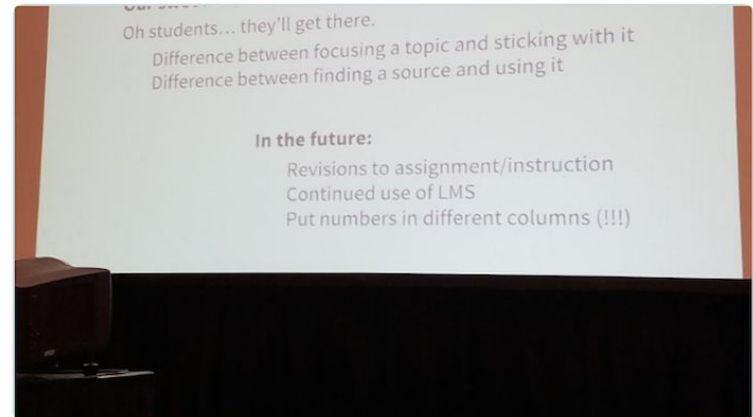
- ACRL 2017
- Twitter
- Blogs
- Personal Interactions



**Zoe Fisher**  
@zoh\_zoh



I need to stop going to sessions, I guess. I just get too mad when I see shit like this - calling students "dum-dums" [#acrl2017](#)



9:43 AM · Mar 25, 2017



# What We Mean by “Student Shaming” (and what we DON’T mean)

- Public or private mocking of specific students, students generally, or students’ work
- In-person or online
- What would you add?
- Not an attempt to paint librarians as “good” or “bad”
- Not intended to blame librarians for very real feelings of burnout/frustration
- Doesn’t refer to instances when librarians need to address legitimately inappropriate student behavior

## What does the literature say?

- Student perceptions of librarians
- Microaggressions
- Vocational Awe
- Burnout
- Emotional labor in service professions



# This led us to a research project!

- 6-question survey:
  - How frequently do you hear colleagues at your library engaging in student shaming?
  - How frequently do you hear colleagues at professional conferences engaging in student shaming?
  - How frequently do you see colleagues engaging in student shaming on social media (Twitter, Facebook, Blog posts, etc.)
  - Student shaming is widespread in higher education
  - Student shaming is widespread among academic librarians
  - Why do you think librarians engage in student shaming?

## Major Themes: Preliminary Findings

- Frustration: with system, with students, with situation, with self
- “Private” venting vs. “Public” shaming
- Bonding with colleagues
- Control/Power

# Frustration

- “**Frustration with students** who wait until the last minute. Generalized lack of civility in society today”
- “Often as a way of expressing frustration - however this is often frustration rooting from **other systemic institutional problems** and the students just bare the brunt of it.”
- “Personally, I think it's a reflection of the **stress/emotions of the librarian** rather than anything the student has done. Venting about students and **workload** will end up in shaming, though that may not be the intent.”

# “Private” Venting vs. “Public” Shaming

- “[...]Complaining, venting, or even mocking in private, **away from the workplace**, isn't student shaming.”
- “Probably because they're venting frustrations. Whether about reference or instruction, complaining can actually be productive as long as people listen to what is said, reflect, and make changes based on those problems. Not a fan of the term "shaming" in this context. This is assuming it's happening **behind closed doors**. **Anyone shaming students F2F is far out of line.**”

## Bonding with colleagues

- “Sometimes groups engage in shaming other groups **to build unity within their own group**, so that could be part of it - kind of a bonding thing for librarians. Also, probably just letting off steam after a long day.”
- “To **bond with coworkers**, to manage stress”
- “**commiseration** + coping strategies”

# Control/Power

- “Condescension masks the **tenuous status** that professional librarians have in the academic hierarchy”
- “I think at the root of student shaming is **librarian powerlessness**. We field the same questions repeatedly and often see solutions to long-standing problems but are **not empowered to put solutions in place**. When we engage in student shaming, I think we are often not intending to shame students at all but to rail against administrators who block us from solving students' problems.”

Things We  
Weren't  
Expecting...

- “Because we see a calibre of students in university that likely shouldn't be in higher education”
- “Students procrastinating or just trying to avoid doing the actual work they're supposed to do.”
- “Because when students fail to prepare for class, fail to attend class, and fail to put any effort at all into their education, they should be shamed! “



# Moving Forward

- More research!
- Be an advocate: call in colleagues
- Addressing the underlying causes that lead librarians to engage in student shaming
  - Naming source of frustration: if it's administrative pressures (and not students), how to address that?
  - Teacher training: build confidence and competence
  - Education about our specific student population (rather than relying on generalizations/assumptions)

What are your ideas?

# Thanks!

## Any questions?

You can find us at:

- Lindsay Inge Carpenter
  - [linge@umd.edu](mailto:linge@umd.edu)
  - [@Linds\\_Librarian](https://twitter.com/Linds_Librarian)
- Callie Branstiter
  - [cbranstiter@sfsu.edu](mailto:cbranstiter@sfsu.edu)
  - [@therealcalliek](https://twitter.com/therealcalliek)
- Charissa Powell
  - [charissa@utk.edu](mailto:charissa@utk.edu)
  - [@CharissaAPowell](https://twitter.com/CharissaAPowell)

## References

Too many to fit on one slide!  
Check out our [reference document](#)

Are we missing your work? Your  
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